

Foreman's Report May 11 thru June 7, 2013

As you can imagine, it has been just an incredibly slow start to the season. The crew got the snow plowing equipment tucked away and has been getting summer construction and maintenance equipment ready. Gravel roads were all retrieved and graded, getting ready for a final grading in preparation of the calcium chloride application. I basically spent a week in the grader, and think have gained some insight to gravel roads on the island, which all comes back to confirming the peculiar position we on the island face trying to build and maintain gravel roads. I received quite a bit of flack about over retrieving gravel from the road edge, which I believe is essential to preserve as much gravel as possible, and absolutely necessary for our pocketbooks. Unless we want to have someone out in the grader constantly grading to keep the grass shoulders at bay, even when the driving surface is fine, retrieving is necessary. It may behoove the Town to invest in a good skid steer/ASV with a harley rake to help maintain the gravel roads, as it would assist with breaking down sod chunks that are basically gravel.

I have to admit to a grave mistake and error in judgment on my part that contributed to the starting of three roadside fires on May 15th, and can't thank our ever vigilant fire department enough for putting them out before they took off across the island...guess I owe them a picnic. The fires resulted after I was running up and down the County road in an effort to even out the grader blade by grinding it on the pavement, which is all a long story and will not lay it out here, but will share with anyone who asks.

I have run the Class I Notice in the paper necessary to hire Handy Andy to spread calcium chloride on the gravel roads, and am requesting hiring him.

Merrill has been back to work, but it has been exceedingly difficult for him to do the work required of the job due to his hip. I have asked that his job be posted, but understand from Pete we are going to keep him in place and let him do as much as he can. I believe for the most part he can do the job satisfactorily.

It is time to hire Patty and Kayla back at the rec center. I request they be hired back with a starting date of June 14th at the budget approved wage, not to exceed budgeted hours.

Jennifer asked me about a landowner in Town that wanted to replace their fence which is on Town ROW. This is an old topic, but told her if I had my way all the fences in the ROW would be moved. They are an unnecessary liability to the Town and cost the Town tax dollars in extra efforts to move snow. The longer they are left in place, the harder it may become to have them removed in the event the Town wanted a sidewalk on the lakeside of Main Street, another old topic. I have been an advocate for this along, with burying the power lines, and the concept was in our CEDS document for awhile. We even, if ever so briefly, had been awarded an earmark to complete the project, but alas, it was not to be.

Invasive Species

The invasive species workshop set up by the NCWMA and me was well attended by area professionals, Town employees involved with invasives, MIWP representatives and concerned citizens. It was a very beneficial, educational opportunity, although the leaves were barely out, making it basically unfeasible to actually get out and kill buckthorn and barberry, as scheduled. The budget amendment I mentioned in the last report can be done at a later date. Ethan is working on the management plan, mapping, gathering property owner's names and addresses needed for property access, updating the invasive brochure, etc.

Griggs Approach

Again, not much new on this front, and I was hoping the project would be done by now. The water is just getting higher daily, and is already above forecasted highs. Barb and I are confirming with WCMP folks as to whether or not we need a grant extension, as it presently expires on June 30th.

Big Bay Town Park

The crew and Leo have been at the park quite a bit trying to clean up the parking lot and campsites to get ready for the summer.

Bob Melin has the well nearly drilled and we keep getting a little closer to having the comfort station open. I informed the contractor and subcontractors we are going to push very hard for a June 15th opening date. We finally received our permits for the west/north campground addition, and I have informed the THPO's concerning Cultural Resource Monitors, per the permit requirements. We have a tentative start date of June 17th, but at this rate (weather related) it is going to be July before we are able to get in to start stumping and road building.

I requested grant extensions from the DNR's Land & Recreation Grants Specialist, Ed Slaminski.

Respectfully Submitted,

Keith Sowl

Town Foreman

Town of La Pointe